

Frequent Errors in Scientific Writing

Stefan Lengauer

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This checklist constitutes a list of bad practices I encounter in almost every Seminar Paper, Bachelor/Master Thesis, or research paper. Please make sure that none of these errors appear in your work if you want to have feedback.

Usage of Acronyms Acronyms should be introduced upon their first usage with the expanded version followed by the abbreviated version in brackets.

- Do not re-introduced already existing acronyms.
- If a concept is abbreviated, introduce the acronym on the first usage.
- Once introduced, do not use the expanded form.

If \LaTeX is used, I heavily recommend to use the `glossaries` package. With that acronyms can be simply define with a handle. In text the expansion is handled automatically by just using `\gls{handle}`. Use `\glsdisablehyper` to prevent \LaTeX from inserting hyperlinks at every acronym.

Smart Quotes For the \LaTeX compiler to render quotes correctly (i.e., opening/closing quotes), ‘ and ’ and “ and ” must be used for single- and double quotes respectively. Do not use ".

Language Consistency Do not mix US and UK English. E.g., color vs. colour. Do not use informal language such as “it’s” or “they’re”.

Captions Captions should be full sentences and end with a ‘.’. They should fully describe the respective figure/table such that the element can be understood without the floating text. If a list of figures is used, a short version of the caption can also be provided. For tables the caption should be on top.

References When referring to a concrete figure, table, equation (e.g., see Figure 1), use uppercase Figure, Table, Caption. Use a non-breaking space ‘~’ to avoid line breaks between the word and the reference. For equations, `\eqnref` must be used (renders the number in brackets).

Citations Citations must be part of the sentence – i.e., if the citation is removed the sentence should still be valid. When the citation is used as a noun, write the author name(s) followed by the corresponding `\cite`.

Enumerations/Bullet Lists In English bullet points start with an uppercase letter.